



## SAFETY ALERT BULLETIN

### NOTE:

All the handrail guards shown in this picture were absent at the time of the accident.



On Sunday, April 25<sup>th</sup> 2004, at approximately 3:30 p.m. an independent contractor employee received serious injuries when he fell approximately 55 inches from an elevated platform to the ground below through an opening created by the absence of all the removable handrail guards. The contractor employee was operating a truck mounted hoist wench at the surface area of a large underground coal mine located in Buchanan County, Va.

The accident occurred when the mechanical drive line-universal joint came apart while the employee was attempting to engage the wench to reel up the hoist cable slack. The employee lost his balance and fell from the elevated platform to the ground below through the opening created by the failure to install the removable handrail guards prior to operating the hoist wench. His injuries included multiple fractures of the left wrist and a laceration on his forehead above the right eye.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- If handrail guards are removable, all employees/contractors should be instructed these handrail guards **must** be in place before performing any work in the affected area.
- Ensure all handrail guards are properly installed and properly maintained when working on any elevated walkway/platform.
- Conduct required pre-operational checks on all equipment before operating.
- Ensure all contract employees receive proper training before entering mine property and prior to operating any equipment.
- Maintain all equipment in safe operating condition.
- Conduct required onshift examinations of all mobile equipment.

Accident Reduction  
Program

April 2004